

T O D D B O S S

GENERAL (LONG) BIO

Todd Boss is an American multi-modal producer, writer, and entrepreneur whose wide-ranging practice includes product innovation, literature, film, performance art, public art, and programmatic initiatives that often evolve into patents, companies, and nationwide activations.

Todd's books are published by W. W. Norton & Co. (2008-2022), and Simon & Schuster (2023). His poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Poetry*, *National Public Radio*, *The London Times*, *American Poetry Review*, *Best American Poetry*, and various anthologies. His lyrics have been performed at Kennedy Center, Carnegie Hall, and around the world. His films have been presented in Cannes, London, New York, Los Angeles and elsewhere. His projects have been featured in *Forbes*, *The Boston Globe*, *Variety*, *Ad Age*, and dozens of other news outlets.

While trained as a poet with an MFA from the University of Alaska-Anchorage, Todd is equally influenced by early-career work in theater, journalism, public relations, event-management, tourism, and music.

His work often involves the development of platforms that invite collaborations: a cross-disciplinary film company, a train-based A.R. museum, a 100-college playwriting residency network, a poetry practice that welcomes private commissions.

Todd is the inventor of the patent-pending Laptop Strap family of business accessories, and directs operations for his cousin's launch of patent-pending sporting goods Limber Bows.

Impact is at the heart of Todd's practice. His nonprofit and for-profit ventures, and most of his less structured projects, skew toward collaborations with women and people of color, or involve tangible charitable give-back for refugee relief work, childhood literacy, disadvantaged youth travel abroad programs, or the work of the ACLU.

In 2018, Todd sold nearly all his possessions. As a two-suitcase nomad with no permanent address, he has since circled the globe on a series of 30+ consecutive house-sits.

For a portfolio of Todd's creative projects, visit toddbossoriginals.com.

LITERARY BIO

Todd Boss is a poet, public artist, inventor, librettist, and film producer in Minneapolis. His four poetry collections, all from W. W. Norton & Co., include *YELLOWROCKET* (2008), *PITCH* (2012), *TOUGH LUCK* (2017) and *SOMEDAY THE PLAN OF A TOWN* (2022). His poems have appeared in *THE NEW YORKER*, *AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW*, *POETRY*, and *NPR*. His lyrics have been performed at Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall. His work has been recognized with Grammy nominations and by the National Book Foundation. He is the founding Artistic Director of Motionpoems, a production company that has turned more than 150 contemporary poems into short films. His large-scale public artworks include a building projection, multimedia installations, and VR projects. He is the inventor of the Laptop Strap

family of business accessories. In 2018, he sold all his possessions and circled the globe in a series of 30+ house-sits.

SHORTENED LITERARY BIO

Todd Boss's most recent of four poetry collections is *SOMEDAY THE PLAN OF A TOWN*. His poems have appeared in *THE NEW YORKER*, *AMERICAN POETRY REVIEW*, *POETRY*, and NPR. He is the founder of Motionpoems, a production company that has turned more than 150 contemporary poems into short films.

PRAISE

Todd Boss is going to be a poetry all-star... He can make any rhyme feel like a concealed weapon.
—*Sherman Alexie*

Boss's writing aches with subtle music, insight, and clear-sighted compassion.
—*Christian Science Monitor*

for *Someday the Plan of a Town* (W. W. Norton, 2022)

Before we could go nearly nowhere, Todd Boss went everywhere. If you are not dazzled by this book's introduction alone, something's missing. His poems always seem like a backbone that holds other language up. They seem sturdy as metal. But fluidly elastic, at once. What a gift! What a luminous voice.
—*Naomi Shihab Nye*

"I travel like some drink—to be lost," Todd Boss writes, and, yes, that is true: he does travel, he does get lost. But at the heart of these journeys is a little something called pleasure: pleasure in the language, pleasure in the way the mind works, sputters, then begins again to work; pleasure in the world moment-by-moment. However, the deepest pleasure in reading these poems is to find oneself at the crossroads where joy and grief meet in a poem, as if by surprise, and yet didn't they know all along that this day of reckoning and recognition would come? Todd Boss broke all the rules, set sail across the globe, and came back with many tales, a few new rules, and a book of poems that honors those crossroads where challenge and delight collide. What a beautiful collision of a book this is!
—*Jim Moore*

With *Someday the Plan of a Town*, Todd Boss is part adventurer, part commentator, and total poet. The clarity and chiseled shapeliness of his poems operate in artful irony with Boss's daring to risk 'not one but all [his] lives.' Boss maps the internal discoveries and day-to-day devotions of a great adventure, where renunciation leads not to piety but affirmation, and roving not to avoidance but engagement. In this fine and distinctive book, we learn from experience that 'noplac*e is / like home.*'

—David Baker, author of *Swift*

Todd Boss is a walking violin—his ear so tuned to the hidden rhythms of speech that he could make any sorrow sing. And here, in *Someday the Plan of a Town*, we're invited to follow that music around the globe as Boss housesits for strangers and falls in love with

each new place, each new life. Yet despite this rich worldliness, Todd Boss's poems turn resolutely inward, searching tenderly for the contours of the human heart.

—Anders Carlson-Wee, author of *The Low Passions*

"I learn by going where I have to go," wrote Theodore Roethke, and in this remarkable book, Todd Boss shows us just what it means to take such a precept to heart. For two years, he has traced an itinerant course across the globe; for the duration of thirty-seven poems, he follows the itinerant path of aural affinity (of buried rhyme and sonic echo) to map a way forward. It's palpable here: poetry is a life raft, a secret repository of wit, a prompt to freshly awakened curiosity. Poetry is at times, admittedly, a vessel for residual bitterness. Poetry is, best of all, a field for the reinvention of delight, even as our beloved planet spins toward apparent doom. All praise to the journey, and all praise to these poems.

—Linda Gregerson

for *Tough Luck* (W. W. Norton, 2017)

Tough Luck is funny and philosophical and wry and large-hearted, and it's our great good luck to have it.

—Beth Ann Fennelly

for *Pitch* (W. W. Norton, 2012)

There is a rich physicality in all of Todd Boss's poems, a reverent gusto for representing the tactile aspects of human life. His poems are about matter in motion... The poems in *Pitch* are never pretentious but always acrobatic, sensuous, technically inventive, muscular, and fun."

—Tony Hoagland

Boss's poems generate their own rambunctious music and remind us that 'yes, / miracles happen.'

—*Minneapolis Star and Tribune*

In *Pitch*, Boss recreates the world as music — one thinks of Frost, of Kay Ryan — that undoes us even as it enchants us. What a pleasure this book is: what a gift.

—Jim Moore

The poems ring clearly; 'pitch,' they recall, is a way to fall as well as a way to sing.

—*Cleveland Plain Dealer*

This is poetic form within and without that makes a true energy.

—*Washington Independent Review*

Boss is on his way, pitching headlong into the future, and readers will want to follow.

—*Booklist Online*

When reading these poems, I feel as though I can see the flickering made by the first flame, the first candle ever lit by poetry. *Pitch* 'must've / taken its author some / time, some shove. / I'll bet it felt good / in the hand' but not half as good as it feels to read it.

—Matthew Dickman

for *Yellowrocket* (W. W. Norton, 2008)

Boss may truly be the up-and-coming master of internal rhyme ... an ambitious first book. —*Georgia Review*

Todd's rapid-fire rhymes and hairpin turns of juxtaposition propel us through this sequence of poems that maps the Wisconsin farm where he grew up to the storm that wiped it out. —*Virginia Quarterly Review*

Todd Boss is something of a rarity—a poet whose work reaches beyond the increasingly impenetrable walls of contemporary verse and generously welcomes readers into its fragile, beautiful world. The poems in *Yellowrocket* unfold with a quiet elegance born of spare, deeply considered language. —*Utne Reader*

If you only buy one book of poetry this year, make it *Yellowrocket*. —*Christian Science Monitor*